

**MESSAGING ORGANIC:
A STRATEGIC PLAN FOR GENESIS ORGANIC JUICE**

by

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Organic food sales in the United States have grown exponentially for the last 20 years, surpassing the growth rate for the overall food and beverage market. Despite this growth, a lot of uncertainty remains among consumers about what goes into organic. Although the national standards and certification requirements have long been set, many consumers are still wary and unsure of the U.S. Department of Agriculture's "Certified Organic" label. The majority of consumers buy organic because of perceived health benefits and cleaner ingredient lists. However, the organic label does guarantee a healthy product. Additionally, conventional food and beverage giants are creeping into the clean ingredient conversation. Organic food and beverage brands now have to find another message to differentiate themselves from the noise. Organic companies have the opportunity to add value to their brands by messaging the benefits of organic beyond what is not included and returning to the heart of the organic movement, environmental preservation. This opportunity is addressed in a strategic communications plan for a Eugene-based organic company, Genesis Organic Juice. The strategic plan aims to educate Genesis consumers about the environmental benefits of organic and position Genesis as a leader in its Pacific Northwest market.

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Introduction

Every week, the average grocery shopper wanders the aisles, choosing what to put in his or her cart from cluttered shelves and numerous product statements. In 2015, the average grocery store carried more than 39,000 items, each product advertising different benefits.¹ The organic shopper bypasses the endless options and goes directly for the U.S. Department of Agriculture label, wanting the healthy choice, free of preservatives and pesticides. When they grab that organic mac and cheese, they feel better about their decision. It is better for them than the other conventional big name brands, they think. However, there is a problem with their health-conscious choice. The organic label on the box is not a health endorsement. Organic is better for them, just not for the reasons they may believe.

The organic food movement developed alongside the environmental movement in the 1960s and 1970s. The primary goal of organic agriculture is to “feed the soil” by replenishing the earth with nutrients, rather than degrading and polluting the environment with conventional farming methods. The USDA’s national organic standard was established on these ideals in 2002, to regulate the organic food industry and set clear expectations for farmers and consumers alike.² More than 10 years later, the founding notion of organic, sustainable agriculture, has been lost on store shelves. Currently, there is a disconnect between consumers’ perceptions of organic and the organic standard, due in large part to the marketing strategies employed by larger, traditional and non-organic food and beverage companies.

¹ "Supermarket Facts." *The Voice of Food Retail*. Food Marketing Institute, 2016. Web. 28 Apr. 2017.

² Guion, Deirdre T., and Julie V. Stanton. "Advertising the U.S. National Organic Standard: A Well-Intentioned Cue Lost in the Shuffle?" *Journal of Promotion Management* 18.4 (2012): 514-35. Web. 2 Oct. 2016.

In 2015, the Organic Trade Association acknowledged the shortcomings of the organic industry by submitting a proposal to the USDA that called for \$30 million a year to be spent on research, accelerated adoption processes, consumer education, and organic branding. The proposal, Generic Research and Promotion Order for Organic, or GRO Organic, is the OTA's response to inadequate funding and consumer confusion that threatens the sector. Currently, the USDA is in the process of reviewing public comments and drafting the final proposal. According to the president of the OTA's Board of Directors and the Director of Government Affairs for Organic Valley, Melissa Hughes, "It's time for organic stakeholders to invest back in our movement — to fund research to help organic farmers, to create and initiate projects to nurture new organic farmers. An organic check-off will allow us to speak to the American consumer in a strong and unified voice."³

Although health is a primary motivation behind consumers' organic food purchasing decisions, organic certification requirements have much larger implications. A driving force of the organic movement is the desire for more sustainable food practices. Authorized soil management practices help increase soil biodiversity, curtail soil erosion, and limit nutrient loss. In addition to enhancing soil quality, the prohibited use of pesticides and synthetic fertilizers reduce groundwater pollution. Organic agriculture also helps mitigate climate change through the soil's increased ability to retain carbon.⁴ Additionally, the livestock requirements ensure better animal welfare

³ Organic Trade Association. "Agriculture Department seeks comments on national organic check-off." *PR Newswire: press release distribution, targeting, monitoring and marketing.* PR Newswire, 17 Jan. 2017. Web. 19 Feb. 2017.

⁴ "Organic Agriculture." Organic Agriculture. Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations, 2016. Web. 11 Nov. 2016.

with mandated access to the outdoors and pasture.⁵ The environmental benefits, arguably the primary purpose of organic agriculture, offer food and beverage companies a competitive advantage as “clean” food items increasingly crowd store shelves.⁶

Not only are consumers confused by the different claims and associated benefits, likely due to the marketing strategies employed by organic brands, but larger food and beverage giants are starting to use similar claims that highlight the absence of ingredients. Organic brands need to shift their marketing focus away from the absence of “bad” ingredients in organic food and capitalize on the beneficial impact on the environment of choosing organic to ward off traditional food and beverage competitors and dispel consumer confusion.

This strategic plan studies the organic industry, implications of current organic marketing practices, consumers’ perceptions of organic, and ways to better educate them. This research acts as a foundation for a strategic communications plan that addresses the misconceptions about organic and adds value to a local organic brand, Genesis Organic Juice.

⁵ Heckman, J. “A History of Organic Farming: Transitions from Sir Albert Howard’s War in the Soil to USDA National Organic Program.” *Renewable Agriculture and Food Systems* 21.3 (2006): 143–150.

⁶ Watrous, Monica. "Trend of the Year: Clean Label." *Food Business News*, 2015. Web. 16 Nov. 2016.

The Organic Standard

Organic farming was born out of a soil management strategy, humus farming, which relied on farming methods that conserved and regenerated the soil. The driving belief of humus farming was to “feed the soil” using soluble fertilizers from organic matter such as crop residue, manure, and natural fertilizers rather than synthetic fertilizers.⁷ The term “organic” first emerged in the 1940s. In 1942, one of the founders of organic agriculture, J. I. Rodale, published *Organic Farming and Gardening*, popularizing organic farming in the United States.⁸ In the 1960s, Rachel Carson published *Silent Spring* in response to the dangers of synthetic pesticide use. Carson’s work encouraged people to look for alternative agricultural practices, coupling organic agriculture with the larger environmental movement.⁹

Although the foundation of the organic movement developed throughout the 1960s and 1970s, the actual practices of organic agriculture varied from producers who used limited synthetic chemicals to those who absolutely prohibited them. The need for third-party certification grew as demand for organic food increased. In 1973, the California Certified Organic Farmers (CCOF) created the first organic certification program.¹⁰ By the end of the 1980s, an excess of large and small agencies offered

⁷ Kuepper, George. *A Brief Overview of the History and Philosophy of Organic Agriculture*. Rep. Kerr Center for Sustainable Agriculture, 15 Aug. 2014. Web. 20 Oct. 2016.

⁸ Francis, Charles. "A Review of 'Organic Struggle: The Movement for Sustainable Agriculture in the United States'" *Organic Farming* 2.1 (2016): n.21 Web. 10 Oct. 2016.

⁹ Kuepper, George. *A Brief Overview of the History and Philosophy of Organic Agriculture*. Rep. Kerr Center for Sustainable Agriculture, 15 Aug. 2014. Web. 20 Oct. 2016.

¹⁰ Ibid., 10.

organic certification programs that were rooted in the same basic principles of organic but differed in the details regarding allowable inputs and required testing.¹¹

The Organic Foods Production Act (OFPA) of 1990 introduced regulations into the organic industry (see Table 1). The OFPA established the National Organic Program and the National Organic Standards Board. Acting under the USDA's Agricultural Marketing Service, the National Organic Program (NOP) writes, interprets, and enforces federal regulations for organic agriculture. The National Organic Standards Board (NOSB) consists of advisors selected by the Secretary of Agriculture and assists the NOP in interpreting the regulation standards. The NOSB also determines the content on the National List for the Organic Standard, a record of all synthetic and natural materials allowed and prohibited in organic food.¹²

The initial draft of the National Organic Standard developed by the NOP met heavy resistance from the organic community. The first round of regulations, published in 1997, permitted sewage sludge, food irradiation, and genetically modified organisms and crops (GMOs) in organic agriculture. With the criticisms of the organic community in mind, the NOP revised and amended the National Organic Standard. Ultimately, the National Organic Standard was implemented in 2002.¹³

The national standard covers the production, handling, and processing of organic products. Agricultural producers who meet these standards are able to receive the

¹¹ Ibid.,11.

¹² Ibid.,11.

¹³ Kuepper, George. *A Brief Overview of the History and Philosophy of Organic Agriculture*. Rep. Kerr Center for Sustainable Agriculture, 15 Aug. 2014. Web. 20 Oct. 2016.

“USDA Certified Organic” seal.¹⁴ Agricultural producers who do not meet the requirements but label their products as organic can face a \$10,000 fine.¹⁵

Category	Requirements
Prohibited crop production practices	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No fertilizers containing synthetic ingredients • No phosphorous, lime or potash as a source of nitrogen • No natural poisons such as arsenic or lead salts • No plastic mulches
Animal production practices	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Organically produced feed • No plastic pellets, manure or urea as feed • No growth hormones • Access to outdoors
Animal health care	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No subtherapeutic doses of antibiotics^[1]_{SEP} • No synthetic internal parasiticides • No medication in absence of illness, except vaccinations
Processing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No additional synthetic ingredients • No known nitrates, heavy metals or toxic materials • Processing facility pest control that is nontoxic • No irradiation
Certification and accountability	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Record how soil fertility will be fostered^[1]_{SEP} • Record how manure will be used as fertilizer^[1]_{SEP} • Record how water contamination by nitrates or bacteria will be avoided when manure used

Table 1: Overview of Organic Foods Production Act

This table outlines the guidelines of the Organic Foods Production Act. It was adapted from Guion and Stanton’s 2012 study.¹⁶

¹⁴ "Organic Certification." *Home*. Organic Trade Association, n.d. Web. 01 Nov. 2016.

¹⁵ Heckman, J. “A History of Organic Farming: Transitions from Sir Albert Howard’s War in the Soil to USDA National Organic Program.” *Renewable Agriculture and Food Systems* 21.3 (2006): 143–150. Web.

¹⁶ Guion, Deirdre T., and Julie V. Stanton. "Advertising the U.S. National Organic Standard: A Well-Intentioned Cue Lost in the Shuffle?" *Journal of Promotion Management* 18.4 (2012): 521. Web. 2 Oct. 2016.

Crop Production Standards

In order to qualify as organic farmland, the land may not have any of the listed prohibited chemicals or materials used on it for at least three years. Organic producers may not use genetic engineering, sewage sludge, or ionizing radiation. To manage soil fertility and crop nutrient levels, organic producers can use crop rotations, tillage, cultivation practices, and cover crops. To supplement these practices, farmers may apply animal and crop waste and permissible synthetic materials.¹⁷ Pest, disease, and weed control can be implemented through physical, mechanical, and biological management practices. If absolutely needed, biological, botanical, and approved synthetic materials may be used.¹⁸

Livestock Standards

Organically raised livestock must have access outside. Large grazing animals, such as cattle and sheep, require access to pasture. Animals used for meat, milk, and other animal products may only receive organic feed and may not be supplemented with any growth hormones or antibiotics. To keep the animals healthy, producers may employ preventive management practices, such as vaccines. If an animal does fall sick, farmers cannot withhold treatment of the animal. If the animal is treated with prohibited medication, it can no longer qualify as organic.¹⁹

¹⁷ Ibid.

¹⁸ Ibid.

¹⁹ Heckman, J. “A History of Organic Farming: Transitions from Sir Albert Howard’s War in the Soil to USDA National Organic Program.” *Renewable Agriculture and Food Systems* 21.3 (2006): 143–150. Web.

Summary

To receive the USDA certification, organic farmers must follow a set of strict federal regulations that ensure their agriculture practices minimize their environmental footprint. These policies help to reduce groundwater pollution, enhance soil quality, and mitigate climate change, and provide a concrete foundation for messaging organic as an environmentally friendly decision.

Literature Review

Organic Consumers

Studies have revealed that consumers' interests in and understanding of organic greatly varies. Although consumers generally hold positive associations with organic, many are confused by what is included in the organic standard and how it differs from other claims.²⁰ A 2010 focus group study found that consumers were uncertain of how "organic" and "all-natural" claims varied and were unaware of the requirements in the USDA organic standard. To participants, "all-natural" and "organic" were both under the umbrella of "no," specifically no hormones, no antibiotics, and no additives. In a 2013 online study, researchers also identified consumer confusion between locally grown and produced products and organic products.²¹ Although consumers expressed an understanding of the basic ideas of each category, fewer food transportation miles and fewer pesticides, the details of each claim were less well understood. Additionally, the study found that although consumers who were unsure of the specifics of each food group did not share similar traits, those who were more accurate in their definitions were predominantly highly educated white females.²²

In a 2009 study, organic consumers were divided into four separate lifestyle segments: adventurous, rational, careless, and conservative uninvolved. Researchers Cong Nie and Lydia Zepeda found that adventurous consumers and rational consumers

²⁰ Abrams, K. M., Meyers, C. A., & Irani, T. A. (2010). Naturally confused: Consumers' perceptions of all-natural and organic pork products. *Agriculture and Human Values*, 27(3), 365-374.
doi:<http://dx.doi.org/10.1007/s10460-009-9234-5>

²¹ Campbell, Benjamin L., Saneliso Mhlanga, and Isabelle Lesschaeve. "Perception Versus Reality: Canadian Consumer Views of Local And Organic." *Canadian Journal of Agricultural Economics* 61.4 (2013): 531-558. *EconLit with Full Text*. Web. 19 Feb. 2017.

²² Ibid.

were the most likely to be active organic and local shoppers.²³ According to their study, Nie and Zepeda identified adventurous consumers as those who were “enthusiastic about shopping, preparing, and consuming foods.” Of these consumers, 16 percent were regular organic shoppers and 65 percent occasionally shopped organic. Adventurous consumers were most likely to be female, college-educated, and living in the western United States. Rational consumers were defined as those who valued the healthiness of food, liked cooking, and were conscious of price. Ten percent of rational customers regularly shopped for organic food, and 56 percent occasionally shopped for organic food. Rational consumers were most likely to be white, middle-aged, and with children. Additionally, rational consumers earned the highest income of all of the lifestyle groups.²⁴

Health consciousness was also identified as an attribute of organic consumers in a 2015 study that examined the food consumption habits of San Francisco State University students.²⁵ The study found that the students with a greater awareness of their health were more likely to choose organic in food service settings. Similar to Nie and Zepeda’s findings, female respondents were more likely to consume organic food and beverages than male respondents were.²⁶

²³ Nie, Cong and Lydia Zepeda. “Lifestyle segmentation of US food shoppers to examine organic and local food consumption,” *Appetite*, 57.1. (2011), 35. Web 12 Oct. 2016.

²⁴ Ibid., 33.

²⁵ Akhondan, Hoda, Karen Johnson-Carroll, and Nancy Rabolt. "Health Consciousness and Organic Food Consumption." *Journal of Family and Consumer Sciences*107.3 (2015): 27. *ProQuest*. Web. 13 Nov. 2016.

²⁶ Ibid., 30.

Organic Advertising

In a 2012 study, Deirdre Guion and Julie Stanton compare food advertisements from organic and conventional food brands from before and after the National Organic Standard. The study involved content analysis of advertisements found in *Parenting* and *Parents* magazine from 1998 to 2008. According to Guion and Stanton, these magazines are ““go-to” sources for information about caring for children, including food choices.”²⁷ The study reviewed all food advertisements from the February, June, and October issues, coding for a number of claims found in the ads (see Table 2).

Claims	Subcategories
OFPA definitions of “organic”	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Usage of pesticides• Usage of hormones• Usage of synthetic chemicals
Nutrient content	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Traditional nutrients (i.e., vitamins, fiber)• Non-traditional nutrients (i.e., soy, DHA)
Health claims	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Specific claims (i.e., related to specific disease)• Non-specific (i.e., “healthy,” “good for your bones”)
Seals of approval	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• USDA certified organic• Endorsements (i.e., American Heart Association)

Table 2: Advertising Claims Considered in 2012 Guion and Stanton Study

The claims and subsequent categories listed are those identified in the 2012 study comparing food advertisements in *Parenting* and *Parents* magazine (Guion and Stanton 521).

After reviewing 684 food advertisements, 3.4 percent of which were for organic brands, the researchers found a number of differences between the advertising strategies

²⁷ Guion, Deirdre T., and Julie V. Stanton. "Advertising the U.S. National Organic Standard: A Well-Intentioned Cue Lost in the Shuffle?" *Journal of Promotion Management* 18.4 (2012): 521. Web. 2 Oct. 2016.

of organic and non-organic foods. Firstly, “no antibiotics,” “no hormones,” and “no pesticides” claims were almost exclusively found in organic food ads. However, the “no preservatives” and “no artificial flavors” claims had bled into non-organic food advertisements. Additionally, overall health claims were substantially higher in organic food advertisements than in non-organic food advertisements. The research also observed that organic food companies advertise the brand over the product, likely driven by a desire to increase brand awareness in a relatively new sector of the food and beverage industry. Lastly, the majority of claims made in organic advertisements focused primarily on what the product does not contain.²⁸

These findings suggest organic is currently messaged as the absence of “bad.” According to a statement released by the USDA in 2000, as cited in Guion and Stanton, one of the main intentions behind the national standard is to offer consumers “another choice in the marketplace. Those who want to buy organic can do so with confidence of knowing exactly what it is that they’re buying.”²⁹ However, as Guion and Stanton suggest, organizations have yet to take the lead on communicating organic, not fully explaining the rigorous standards and environmental benefits.

28 Guion, Deirdre T., and Julie V. Stanton. "Advertising the U.S. National Organic Standard: A Well-Intentioned Cue Lost in the Shuffle?" *Journal of Promotion Management* 18.4 (2012): 524. Web. 2 Oct. 2016.

29 Guion, Deirdre T., and Julie V. Stanton. "Advertising the U.S. National Organic Standard: A Well-Intentioned Cue Lost in the Shuffle?" *Journal of Promotion Management* 18.4 (2012): 515. Web. 2 Oct. 2016.

Market Research

According to the Organic Trade Association, organic food sales account for 5 percent of total food sales in the United States. Consumer demand for organic products has consistently increased since the 1990s. In 1997, organic sales amounted to \$3.6 billion. In 2015, organic sales grew to \$43.3 billion, up 11 percent from 2014.³⁰ In comparison, the United States' overall food market grew three percent in 2015. Notably, one of the fastest growing categories within the organic food and beverage industry was "fresh juices and drinks," which experienced 33.5 percent growth in 2015.³¹ Although the sales of organic juices and drinks are rising, the household penetration rate of the category slowly declined, from 32 percent in 2009 to 29 percent in 2013.³²

The 2015 Mintel "Organic Food and Beverage Shoppers" report found that one of the largest selling factors of organic products is the notion that consumers believe organic food translates to healthier food. According to Mintel, 49 percent of millennials pick organic for at least half of their food and beverage items. In an Internet survey conducted for the report, 46 percent of younger millennials (1987-1994), 43 percent of older millennials (1977-1986), and 52 percent of non-millennials purchased organic food and beverages because they believed the products to be healthier. In addition to perceived health benefits, consumers purchased organic products for what the standard excludes. According to the Mintel report, 36 percent of younger millennials, 29 percent

³⁰ "Organic Market Analysis." Home. Organic Trade Association, 2016. Web. 20 Oct. 2016

³¹ "U.S. Organic Sales Post New Record of \$43.3 Billion in 2015." Home. Organic Trade Association, 19 May 2016. Web. 14 Oct. 2016.

³² "Organic Food and Beverage Shoppers." Organic Food and Beverage Shoppers. Mintel, Mar. 2015. Web. 04 Nov. 2016.

of older millennials, and 45 percent of non-millennials purchased organic food and beverages because they do not contain excessive chemicals and ingredients.

This fear of synthetic chemicals and pesticides is a driving force for purchasing organic. Of the West Coast respondents who buy organic, 39 percent reported that they choose organic to avoid products with pesticides. In contrast, 24 percent stated the ethical treatment of animals as a reason to buy organic, and only 12 percent listed environmental values.

Through the clutter of the many natural and health food claims on grocery shelves, organic labels struggle to remain valued and trusted. According to the 2015 Mintel report, 51 percent of respondents believed that organic labels provide an excuse for a brand to charge more for its product. Additionally, only 42 percent of respondents trust that organic-labeled products are truly organic.³³

Although the USDA organic certification relies on rigorous standards, few consumers understand what the certification involves. The Mintel study found that 40 percent of high-volume organic buyers are unsure of what all of the benefits are. Of consumers who buy organic for at least half of their food and beverage items, 67 percent did not fully understand the benefits of choosing organic. Organic food and beverage companies have an opportunity to clarify and highlight the benefits of organic food production to address this confusion and add value to their brands.

A 2015 Nielsen Global Health and Wellness Report found that in North America, 19 percent of respondents are willing to pay more for sustainably sourced ingredients, 25 percent are willing to pay more for organic ingredients, and 19 percent

³³ Organic Food and Beverage Shoppers." Organic Food and Beverage Shoppers. Mintel, Mar. 2015. Web. 04 Nov. 2016.

are willing to pay more for local ingredients. In comparison, the global average of those willing to pay more for sustainably sourced ingredients is 30 percent, the average of those willing to pay more for organic is 33 percent, and the average of those willing to pay more for local ingredients is 24 percent. For perspective, the respondents from the United States and Canada valued these food attributes almost 20 percent less than respondents from Latin America valued them.³⁴

When it comes to the environmental impacts of purchasing decisions, 42 percent of North American consumers were willing to pay more for a product from companies committed to the environment. This commitment has proven to be profitable. In a 2014 year-over-year analysis, Nielsen found that companies that marketed sustainability increased sales by 5 percent, while those without sustainable marketing grew only 1 percent.³⁵

Summary

Consumers have a lot to consider when purchasing food, from the health claims to social and environmental impacts. Although their sentiment toward organic is positive, studies suggest that consumers are unsure of the distinction between “all-natural,” “organic” and “local.” In general, shoppers associate organic with the absence of factors, such as antibiotics, additives, and hormones. This is likely related to the marketing strategy of organic food and beverage brands that relies on these selling points. However, research suggests that these claims are becoming less exclusive to

³⁴“Global Health and Wellness Report.” Nielsen. Nielsen, Jan. 2015. Web. 22 Nov. 2016.

³⁵“Global Consumers are Willing to Put Their Money Where Their Heart is When it Comes to Goods and Services from Companies Committed to Social Responsibility.” [Http://www.nielsen.com/](http://www.nielsen.com/). Nielsen, 17 June 14. Web. 27 Apr. 2017.

organic, as conventional food and beverage brands are also promoting “no preservatives” and “no artificial flavors” when marketing their products. This has led to brand confusion and dilutes the traditional message of organic food and beverage companies.

Researchers identified organic consumers as predominantly female, white millennials or middle-aged parents who are health conscious. Market research suggests that shoppers purchase organic food because they believed the products to be healthier. However, there has not been any conclusive scientific proof that organic products are healthier.³⁶ Nielsen suggests the responsibility is on the companies to help consumers “understand the benefits of particular ingredients and foods using out-of-store communications, in-store signage/displays and package claims.”³⁷ Communications focused on education appear to be a missing but necessary step to bridge the gap between the perceived and actual benefits of organic.

³⁶ Aubrey, Allison, and Dan Charles. "Why Organic Food May Not Be Healthier For You." *NPR*. NPR, 04 Sept. 2012. Web. 28 Apr. 2017.

³⁷"Global Health and Wellness Report." Nielsen. Nielsen, Jan. 2015. Web. 22 Nov. 2016.

Strategic Plan

Situation Analysis

Genesis Organic Juice

Genesis Organic Juice began in Eugene, Oregon, in 1975 as a juice cooperative dedicated to producing juice in its truest form: raw and organic. In 2006, the government implemented regulations that banned raw juice, forcing the company to temporarily close, due to its refusal to pasteurize its juices because of heat's effects on vitamins, minerals, and flavor.³⁸ In 2007, Genesis was saved by a partnership with Toby's Family Foods, and the company introduced a high-pressure processed juice that helped pasteurize without heat.³⁹ Today, Genesis continues its commitment to creating juices in small batches, using selected organic whole fruits. The company remains in Eugene, and its organic juices are distributed throughout the Pacific Northwest in independent markets, co-ops, and grocery chains such as New Seasons Market, Whole Foods, Safeway, and Market of Choice.⁴⁰ Genesis' vision from its inception remains the same: "To make food the way it should be: use the fewest possible ingredients, of the highest quality, sourced locally, and processed minimally."⁴¹

In October 2016, Genesis Juice launched a new product label, with a background of watercolor fruit drawings created in-house by a production worker. Additionally, the company redesigned its website. According to the president of Toby's

³⁸Russo, Ed. "Genesis Juice of Springfield Rolls out New Label to Gain Customers, Market Share." The Register-Guard. N.p., 09 Oct. 2016. Web. 07 Nov. 2016.

³⁹"About." *Genesis Juice*. N.p., 2016. Web. 21 Oct. 2016.

⁴⁰"Press." *Genesis*

Juice. N.p., 2016. Web. 21 Oct. 2016.

⁴¹"About." *Genesis Juice*. N.p., 2016. Web. 21 Oct. 2016.

Family Foods and Genesis, Jonah Alves, competition has increased substantially in the juice sector, from large juice companies such as Odwalla to smaller “functional juice” companies such as Suja. The decision to revamp the label was made in an effort to combat slowing sales growth by better communicating the company’s identity and mission to the consumer.⁴²

Despite its rebranding efforts, Genesis continues to rely on traditional organic messaging. Its new packaging states, “Choosing organic means non-GMO, better for you & the ecosystem. No hazmat suit required.” The organic industry’s fear-mongering techniques have received backlash for using scientific jargon to scare consumers.⁴³ Genesis Juice faced similar criticism for marketing inorganic as dangerous on its Instagram account from the Instagram follower @lonewolfjob (see Figure 1).

⁴²Russo, Ed. "Genesis Juice of Springfield Rolls out New Label to Gain Customers, Market Share." The Register-Guard. N.p., 09 Oct. 2016. Web. 07 Nov. 2016.

⁴³Senapathy, Kavin. "Would You Rather Buy Organic Or Poison Your Family? EWG Wants You To Pick One." Forbes. Forbes Magazine, 12 July 2016. Web. 20 Feb. 2017.



Figure 1: Genesis Organic Juice's Instagram post on September 13, 2016

This figure displays Genesis Organic Juice's messaging of organic on its Instagram account, which received a negative response from an Instagram user.

Although the majority of the content Genesis publishes is not centered on organic, when it does produce content about organic it tends to play into consumers' misconceptions. On February 16, 2017, Genesis posted an infographic on Facebook explaining why it chooses organic ingredients (see Figure 2). However, the organic graphic focuses on the strawberries containing "powerful antioxidants" that help "boost immune system[s]" and "increase heart health." The inorganic graphic includes a needle and toxic sign, paired with the copy, "exposure to pesticides & herbicides," "lower vitamin C content," and "exposure to antibiotics." Although strawberries provide health benefits, these health benefits are not exclusive to organic strawberries. Some studies

suggest conventional strawberries contain lower levels of vitamin C.⁴⁴ However, the graphic does not clarify this difference and instead portrays the benefits as either/or. The imagery of a skull and a needle is problematic, eliciting fear rather than educating consumers.



Figure 2: Genesis Organic Juice Facebook post on February 16, 2017

This figure displays a photo series that Genesis posted on February 16, promoting organic strawberries as healthy and inorganic as toxic.

Political, Economic, Social, and Technological (PEST) Analysis

Political

The future of organic food and beverages remain unclear under the first months of Donald Trump's presidency. During President Obama's final days in office, the United States Department of Agriculture passed stricter standards for organic meat and

⁴⁴Chang, Kenneth. "Organic Food vs. Conventional Food." *The New York Times*. The New York Times, 04 Sept. 2012. Web. 21 Feb. 2017.

egg producers. However, some conservative farm-state lawmakers have vocalized opposition to the increased regulation, expressing their desire to reverse the animal welfare rules under the Trump administration.⁴⁵ Under the new administration, the USDA faces a 21 percent budget cut of \$4.7 billion. These proposed budget cuts threaten the USDA organic program. Although the administration seems set on cutting the USDA, when Trump's head of agriculture, Sonny Purdue, was questioned about his support for the USDA organic program and other efforts endangered by the cuts, he said he supported the programs. The future of the USDA, and subsequently the security of the organic program, is uncertain.⁴⁶

Economic

Organic food and beverage items can cost 20 to 100 percent more than conventional food and beverage items. This price difference acts as a barrier to lower-income American households. According to a 2014 Gallup poll, 50 percent of upper-income Americans actively buy organic food. In comparison, 42 percent of lower-income Americans actively include organic foods in their diets. Notably, a quarter of lower-income Americans avoid organic and only 10 percent of upper-income Americans actively avoid it.⁴⁷ Disposable income allows consumers to consider additional factors in food purchasing decisions that may raise the cost. According to the Bureau of Economic Analysis, in January 2017 Americans' personal income and

⁴⁵ "Organic egg and meat producers will have to follow stricter animal welfare rules, USDA says." Los Angeles Times. Los Angeles Times, 18 Jan. 2017. Web. 23 Mar. 2017.

⁴⁶ Sullivan, Bartholomew D. "Sonny Perdue gets friendly reception during Agriculture secretary hearing." USA Today. USA Today, 23 Mar. 2017. Web. 23 Mar. 2017.

⁴⁷ "Forty-Five Percent of Americans Seek Out Organic Foods." Gallup.com. Gallup, 07 Aug. 2014. 24 Mar. 2017.

personal disposable income has increased 0.4 percent, or \$63 billion and \$40.1 billion respectively.⁴⁸

Social

Differences in generation and geography correlate with differences in organic food purchasing habits. According to a 2014 Gallup poll, 54 percent of Americans living in the West actively include organic foods in their diets, while 39 percent of Americans living in the East buy organic. Americans living in cities, big or small, are also more likely to choose organic foods than those living in a small or rural town. Younger generations are more likely to eat organic. Fifty-three percent of Americans ages 18-29 and 48 percent of Americans ages 30 to 48 actively try to include organic in their diet. In comparison, 33 percent of Americans ages 65 and older actively try to include organic in their diet.⁴⁹

Technological

Social media use influences consumer purchasing decisions. In 2014, approximately 40 percent of social media users reported purchasing something they shared or favorited on Pinterest, Facebook, or Twitter. The 2014 study found 71 percent of consumers were likely to make a purchase because of referral on social media. The majority of these purchases take place within three weeks of the social media

⁴⁸ "Personal Income and Outlays, January 2017." U.S. Bureau of Economic Analysis (BEA). US Department of Commerce, 1 Mar. 2017. Web. 24 Mar. 2017.

⁴⁹ "Personal Income and Outlays, January 2017." U.S. Bureau of Economic Analysis (BEA). US Department of Commerce, 1 Mar. 2017. Web. 24 Mar. 2017.

interaction.⁵⁰ Purchases influenced by social media activity are not limited to online shopping but also affect in-store purchases.⁵¹

PEST Summary

The future of the organic standard and regulations remains uncertain under the Trump Administration. The proposed budget cuts to the USDA could affect its organic program; however, it is too soon to determine how the U.S. Secretary of Agriculture will proceed. The possible budget cuts and the unclear security of the organic program provide Genesis with an opportunity to speak up about organic as a national concern.

The organic consumer profile is influenced by a number of factors, including cost, geography, and age. Price continues to be a barrier for U.S. consumers. Although Americans' disposable income increased in 2017, the cost of organic may continue to shape the consumer profile, excluding lower-income Americans. Organic buyers are predominantly 18 to 48 years old. Additionally, American consumers on the West coast are more likely to value organic than those on the East coast. These factors shape Genesis' key demographics.

Lastly, the influence of social media use on purchasing decisions changes the marketing landscape. For Genesis, it may be most effective to concentrate efforts on creating impactful content on its owned channels and promoting user-generated content from key influencers, such as food bloggers.

⁵⁰ Stadd, Allison. "How Social Media Influences Purchase Decisions." *Adweek*. Adweek, 22 Jan. 2014. Web. 24 Mar. 2017.

⁵¹ Seave, Ava. "How Social Media Moves Consumers From 'Sharing' To 'Purchase'" *Forbes*. Forbes Magazine, 24 July 2013. Web. 24 Mar. 2017.

SWOT Analysis

Genesis Organic Juice faces a number of challenges (see Appendix A).

Conventional food and beverage companies are not only using similar messaging but also are buying natural and organic juice brands, further increasing competition for Genesis. For example, in 2015 the Coca-Cola Company bought Suja Juice.⁵²

Additionally, Genesis has a small marketing budget that limits the brand from larger opportunities, such as participating in industry expos. Lastly, consumer confusion about the juice's selling points, including organic and cold-pressed, threaten to detract from the value of those claims. However, opportunities exist. Genesis can take advantage of its small "hippie" co-op brand identity in its marketing efforts, combating the larger corporations. With a Pacific Northwest market, Genesis' consumers are likely to value sustainability. By framing buying organic as an environmentally friendly decision, Genesis has the opportunity to capitalize on consumers' increasing desire to purchase sustainable products.

⁵² Church, Jeff. "Organic Non-GMO Suja Juice Cold-Pressed." *Suja Juice*. Suja Juice, 2015. Web. 26 Apr. 2017.

Communications Audit

Genesis Organic Juice relies heavily on owned media for its marketing efforts. The organization's primary outlet for information is its newly redesigned website. The website houses product information, company history, recipes, an interactive map of stores that carry the juice, and a blog. Product pages display an ingredient list, nutritional information, the fruit's origin, health benefits of the ingredients, relevant recipes, and a cross-promotional section with other suggested products.

The beverage company is active on multiple social media platforms, including Instagram, Facebook, Twitter, and Pinterest. Genesis' Instagram account has more than 600 followers. Recipes for smoothie bowls and cocktails dominate the company's daily posts. The brand shares visually engaging photos with vibrant colors and user-generated content. Free product giveaways garner the highest follower engagement. Recently, Genesis Organic Juice has recruited several Instagram ambassadors. According to the marketing manager, the Instagram users post photos of Genesis Juice or recipes in exchange for free product. The ambassadors extend the brand's reach and create free engaging content.

The majority of the content published on Instagram is reposted to Genesis' Facebook page. The page has 2,163 likes and 2,102 followers. Although Facebook posts receive limited engagement, the brand is responsive to comments. In addition to recycled Instagram content, Genesis posts infographics, event announcements, recipes, and behind-the-scenes videos of juice production. The brand's Twitter account posts similar, if not the same, content as Instagram and Facebook. Genesis' Twitter has 250

followers; however, its tweets receive little to no engagement. Genesis' Pinterest account has 76 followers. Boards range from recipes to fitness exercises.

Genesis Organic Juice participates in a number of small trade shows and events in the Pacific Northwest, including Portland Veg Fest and the Eugene Good Earth Home, Garden & Living Show. The juice brand has received coverage in local news publications, such as Eugene Weekly and the Register-Guard, for its rebranding efforts and processing methods. In those articles, Jonah Alves, president of Genesis Organic Juice and Toby's Family Foods, has acted as the primary spokesperson for the brand.

In comparison to its big-name competitors, Genesis' social media following is small. For example, Suja Juice has 441,789 Facebook page likes,⁵³ 140,000 Instagram followers,⁵⁴ 24,900 Twitter followers,⁵⁵ and 11,342 Pinterest followers.⁵⁶

⁵³ "Facebook - Suja Juice." SUJA juice . Facebook, n.d. Web. 29 May 2017.

⁵⁴ Suja Juice (@lovesuja) • Instagram photos and videos. (2017, May 29). Retrieved May 29, 2017, from <https://www.instagram.com/lovesuja>

⁵⁵ "Twitter - SUJA Juice." Twitter - Suja Juice. Twitter, 29 May 2017. Web. 29 May 2017.

⁵⁶ "Suja Juice (lovesuja)." Pinterest. Pinterest, 29 May 2017. Web. 29 May 2017.

Key Publics

Gung-ho Millennial Organic Buyers

As millennials mature into adults with larger incomes and growing families, their purchasing power increases. The generation's influence on supermarket offerings continues to grow. According to Jeffries Alix Partners' "Trouble in Aisle 5," millennials crave convenient and inexpensive food. Despite this, the generation is still willing to pay extra for fresh, healthy, and organic food.⁵⁷ Approximately 50 percent of millennials pick organic for at least half of their food and beverage items. Additionally, millennials have shown an increasing interest in the environmental impact of their purchasing decisions.⁵⁸ In a 2015 Nielsen global study, nearly 75 percent of millennial respondents stated they would be willing to pay extra for sustainable products, in comparison to half of millennial respondents in 2014.⁵⁹

The 2014 Nielsen report, "Breaking the Myths," found that millennials expect to interact with companies, authentically and personally, via social media.⁶⁰ This means direct and transparent conversations on brands' social media platforms. Millennials use a wide variety of social media platforms but primarily use Facebook, Instagram, Pinterest, and Twitter.⁶¹ To continue their relationship with the brand online, most millennial users follow their favorite brands on social media to show support, receive

⁵⁷ Hoffman, Beth. "How 'Millennials' Are Changing Food as We Know It." *Forbes*. Forbes Magazine, 26 Sept. 2012. Web. 21 Feb. 2017.

⁵⁸ "Organic Food and Beverage Shoppers." *Organic Food and Beverage Shoppers*. Mintel, Mar. 2015. Web. 04 Nov. 2016.

⁵⁹ "Green Generation: Millennials Say Sustainability Is a Shopping Priority." *Nielsen*. Nielsen, 05 Nov. 2015. Web. 15 Feb. 2017.

⁶⁰ "Millennial Breaking The Myths." *Nielsen*. Nielsen, 2014. Web. 01 Mar. 2016.

⁶¹ "Social Media Fact Sheet." Pew Research Center: Internet, Science & Tech. Pew Research Center, 12 Jan. 2017. Web. 25 Apr. 2017.

discounts, and view lifestyle content they are interested in. The Nielsen report also states millennials are more receptive to advertisements that feature well-known or relatable people.⁶² Brands should not only focus on increasing their reach on owned social media accounts, but also on influencer's social media feeds.

Primary Research Findings

In order to dive deeper into the millennial buyers' perspective on organic and food purchasing decisions, I conducted extensive interviews with four Pacific Northwest millennials who buy organic food and beverage items regularly.

These millennial organic consumers in the Pacific Northwest consider a number of factors when purchasing food and beverage items, including cost, ingredients, diet restrictions, and packaging. They shop at a variety of stores known for organic and natural food, such as Trader Joe's, Market of Choice, Kiva, New Frontier Market, Whole Foods and Sundance. Of the organic consumers interviewed, trust in the organic label varied. Some expressed a mistrust of certain stores' reliability in their organic labeling, such as Fred Meyer and Trader Joe's. One consumer acknowledged their dependence on organic labels to identify organic food and beverage items. Lastly, some millennial organic buyers expressed mistrust in the organic claim, noting exposés and studies that have uncovered failings in the label. However, they did not reference a specific study or source.

Price was a unanimous drawback to buying organic. The most commonly answered reasons for buying organic included "more natural," "fewer pesticides,"

⁶² Bennet, Shea. "10 Reasons Why Millennials Follow Brands on Facebook, Twitter and Pinterest." *Adweek*. Adweek, 06 Feb. 2015. Web. 10 Feb. 2017.

“health,” “GMOS” and “quality.” Environmental reasons and soil health were only mentioned as the primary reason for one interviewee. This does not mean environmental factors do not influence their purchasing decisions. In fact, all of the interviewees buy eco-friendly products with hopes of reducing pollution and other impacts on the environment.

Millennial organic consumers look in stores and on labels for information about the food and beverage items they purchase. Some researched online about food and beverage brands, but mostly to view health or environmental impacts of certain products. Millennial organic buyers learn about brands via social media, specifically on Instagram and Facebook. Some follow food and beverage brands; however, the majority noted food Instagrammers, lifestyle bloggers and interest groups as their sources of information about food and beverage brands.

Millennial Key Messages

Based on the value millennials find in the environmental impact of the products they purchase and the skepticism they expressed about the organic label, the following key messages were developed to emphasize the strict standard and underscore the scientifically proven benefit to the environment.

Genesis believes that the environmental impact of its juice is just as important as the quality; that's why it chooses organic ingredients sourced from local farmers.

- The organic standard is rooted in the environmental movement. Organic farming practices protect and enhance soil quality, reduce groundwater pollution and mitigate climate change.⁶³
- The environmental benefit of organic is supported by extensive research. In 2011 analysis of 766 scientific papers, organic farms were found to have higher levels of biodiversity than conventional farms, an important indicator of soil health.⁶⁴
- In order to receive the “USDA Certified Organic” seal, farmers must adhere to strict standards in crop production, processing and record keeping.

Conscientious Parent Organic Buyers

A 2014 OTA survey found that 80 percent of American households with at least one child, 18 years old or younger, has purchased organic products at least once in the last two years. Of the 1,200 households surveyed, 90 percent of parents responded that they “sometimes” buy organic food for their children, and 25 percent of parents “always” buy organic.⁶⁵ When it comes to household grocery shopping, mothers are more likely to buy food than fathers are.⁶⁶

Generation X, which includes most parents of children this age, tends to be loyal to brands and technologically savvy. Generation X women prefer tamer and safer

⁶³ "Organic Agriculture." Organic Agriculture. Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations, 2016. Web. 11 Nov. 2016.

⁶⁴ "FAQ." *Organic Agriculture: What are the environmental benefits of organic agriculture?* Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations , n.d. Web. 16 Apr. 2017.

⁶⁵ "More parents choosing organic for their kids, says new study." *Organic Trade Association.* Organic Trade Association , 13 June 2014. Web. 24 Mar. 2017.

⁶⁶ Miley, Marissa , and Ann Mack. "The New Female Consumer: The Rise of The Real Mom." *Advertising Age.* AdAge, 16 Nov. 2009. Web. 21 Mar. 2017.

advertising than millennials.⁶⁷ Women in Generation X favor advertising that is sentimental, family friendly, relatable, and focused on real life.⁶⁸ Nielsen's 2016 Social Media Report uncovered Generation X as the generation that spends the most time on social media, averaging seven hours per week.⁶⁹ According to the Pew Research Center, 79 percent of Americans online, ages 30 to 49, use Facebook, 31 percent use Instagram, 34 percent use Pinterest, and 22 percent use Twitter.⁷⁰ Generation X also relies on traditional media sources, with approximately 60 percent of them reading newspapers and nearly 50 percent listening to the radio.⁷¹

Primary Research Findings

To gain a better understanding of parent consumers' outlook on the organic standard and organic products, I conducted four in-depth interviews with Pacific Northwest parents who regularly shop for organic food and beverage items for themselves and their family.

Parent organic buyers considered a variety of factors in their food purchasing decisions, such as health, diet restrictions, unprocessed, and minimal ingredients. They will shop at a variety of stores based on their needs. For example, they will shop at wholesale retailers for bulk, but will shop at Trader Joe's, Fred Meyer, Market of Choice, Summit, and Natural Grocers for everyday food items. Similar to millennial

⁶⁷ "Reaching Generation X: Authenticity in Advertising." *Newswire / Reaching Generation X: Authenticity in Advertising / Nielsen*. Nielsen, 27 Nov. 2012. Web. 24 Mar. 2017.

⁶⁸ "Reaching Generation X: Authenticity in Advertising." *Newswire / Reaching Generation X: Authenticity in Advertising / Nielsen*. Nielsen, 27 Nov. 2012. Web. 24 Mar. 2017.

⁶⁹ Casey, Sean. "The 2016 Nielsen Social Media Report." 2016 Nielsen Social Media Report. Nielsen, 17 Jan. 2017. Web. 21 Mar. 2017.

⁷⁰ "Social Media Fact Sheet." Pew Research Center: Internet, Science & Tech. Pew Research Center, 12 Jan. 2017. Web. 25 Apr. 2017.

⁷¹ Stein., Lindsay. "Generation X: The Forgotten Middle Child Among Marketers." *Ad Age*. Ad Age, 20 July 2016. Web. 27 Apr. 2017.

organic buyers, parent consumers' degree of trust in organic labels varies based on the store. When interviewed, parent buyers expressed confidence in the integrity of natural and organic stores. Parent consumers stated they trust organic certified products, because they felt like they had done enough research to understand the standard.

They stated their primary reason for buying organic food and beverage items as health and an avoidance of chemicals and toxins. Many mentioned that they held different standards for themselves and their children, often placing a higher value on purer and simpler ingredients for their kids than themselves. All of the interviewees bought eco-friendly and local products because they want to live sustainably.

Many interviewees mentioned feeling overwhelmed by choice in the food aisles. When looking for information about food and beverage items, they rely on the label, news sources, and trusted online resources. They expressed a distrust of company-owned channels for unbiased information. When learning about brands, parent organic buyers find information on social media, specifically mentioning Pinterest and Twitter. These accounts are generally food bloggers or opinion leaders in the industry or field.

Parent Key Messages

Based on Generation X's receptivity towards family friendly messaging and the parent buyers' eco-friendly purchasing habits, the key messages were developed to frame buying organic as a way to preserve the environment for their children's future. Not only does Genesis Organic Juice offer products free of pesticides and preservatives for your little ones, its commitment to organic helps to protect the environment for their future.

- According to the U.S. Global Change Research Program, climate change threatens to reduce water supplies, endanger trees, cause sea levels to rise and increase the acidity of the ocean in the Northwest.⁷²
- Organic farming not only preserves the environment, it also betters it; organic farming practices mitigate climate change through maintaining and enhancing soil quality.⁷³
- Every Genesis product is “USDA Certified,” meaning all of the organic farmers that have supplied its ingredients use farming practices dedicated to preserving the environment.

⁷² "U.S. regional effects." Global Climate Change. NASA, n.d. Web. 16 Apr. 2017.

⁷³ "Organic Agriculture." Organic Agriculture. Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations, 2016. Web. 11 Nov. 2016.

Opportunity Statement

Genesis Organic Juice needs a strategic communications plan to revamp its messaging of organic to better educate its consumers and differentiate itself from its competitors.

This plan is designed to redirect Genesis' marketing efforts to better consumers' understanding of organic, add value to the brand, and position Genesis as a leader in its Pacific Northwest market.

Goal Statement

Effectively educate organic consumers on the organic standard and its implications, framing their decision to purchase Genesis Organic Juice as an environmentally friendly choice and expanding Genesis' consumer base.

Objectives

Objective 1: To increase Pacific Northwest organic juice consumers' awareness of the environmental benefits of organic by 25 percent over the next six months.

Objective 2: Obtain media coverage containing our key messages in five media outlets across the Pacific Northwest in the next six months.

Strategies & Tactics

Millennial Organic Buyers

Objective 1: To increase Pacific Northwest organic juice consumers' awareness of the environmental benefits of organic by 25 percent over the next six months.

Strategy 1: Engage Genesis millennial buyers in a conversation about the standards and the impact of organic on digital platforms. This strategy will allow Genesis to drive discussion with millennials using the key public's preferred social media channels; Facebook, Instagram, and Twitter. According to the primary research findings, millennials look to company websites and social media accounts for information on a brand. The content should focus on connecting "organic" and "environmentally friendly." Millennials' willingness to pay more for eco-friendly products suggest messaging organic as a sustainable choice will add value to the brand in the consumers' eyes.

- **Tactic 1:** Dedicate biweekly blog posts to information about the organic standard on the company website and send corresponding newsletters to the Genesis emailing list
 - Post related content on Facebook, Instagram, and Twitter and include links back to the company website
 - Highlight ways consumers can incorporate organic practices into their lifestyle
 - Feature fruit farmers' stories and testimonials on why they choose to farm organic
 - (See Appendix B for example content)

- **Tactic 2:** Announce a monthly #SaveTheSoil challenge in the newsletter and on Facebook, Instagram, and Twitter, asking Genesis consumers to make one change to better the environment each month
 - Consumers will be encouraged to post their challenge on Twitter, Instagram, and Facebook for the chance to be featured on Genesis' social media accounts and receive free products
 - (See Appendix B for contest details)
- **Tactic 3:** During September, national organic month, post content dedicated to informing consumers about organic on Facebook, Instagram, and Twitter
 - Cite a third-party source, such as the Organic Trade Association, to back up claims in every post
 - Ensure posts state specific benefits of organic and avoid negative or misleading commentary about inorganic food and beverages items
 - (See Appendix C for example content)
- **Tactic 4:** In September, promote a product giveaway featuring organic food and beverage items from Genesis Organic Juice and other local natural and organic brands (e.g., Nancy's Organic Yogurt, Coconut Bliss)
 - Promote the giveaway on Genesis and partners' Facebook and Instagram accounts
 - In order to enter the competition, consumers must comment on why they buy organic on Facebook and Instagram

- Equip social media managers with key messages to help engage in a conversation about organic on the comment feed to help dispel any misconceptions
- Five winners will be selected at random and will receive a package with free products equaling a total value of \$50 or more

Strategy 2: Partner with influencers to amplify Genesis' message. This strategy will allow Genesis to leverage opinion leaders to advocate for the environmental importance of organic. As discovered while conducting interviews, millennial organic buyers follow a number of food and environmental bloggers and Instagram accounts. In comparison to traditional advertising, influencers are a more trusted source of information, offering a word-of-mouth endorsement to the brand.

- **Tactic 1:** Develop an influencer program with Pacific Northwest organic food and lifestyle bloggers
 - Send influencers packages of sample products and print materials
 - Print materials will include maps of sourcing to demonstrate how local the fruit is, organic farmer testimonials, and Genesis' reasoning for choosing organic
 - Share recipes and user-generated content from influencers on Facebook, Instagram, and Twitter
- **Tactic 2:** Invite natural and organic food bloggers and sustainability bloggers to tour Genesis' headquarters

- Send an email pitch to popular Pacific Northwest food bloggers, stressing Genesis' high quality ingredients and commitment to the environment
- (See Appendix D for potential Pacific Northwest influencers)

Parent Organic Buyers

Objective 1: To increase Pacific Northwest organic juice consumers' awareness of the environmental benefits of organic by 25 percent over the next six months.

Strategy 1: Frame Genesis' commitment to organic as a local response to a national issue in trade publications. Parent organic buyers expressed their hesitation to believe company-produced content during the interviews. This strategy will allow us to use a third-party source to relay Genesis' organic cooperative roots and commitment to the environment.

- **Tactic 1:** Pitch a feature story to Pacific Northwest trade publications
 - Invite publications for a tour of Genesis and interview with Jonah Alves
 - Highlight the small but mighty force of a juice coop dedicated to making the smallest impact on the environment while delivering the highest quality products
 - (See Appendix E for media list)
 - (See Appendix F for email pitch)

Strategy 2: Target organic parent buyers as they make their food purchasing decision.

This strategy will allow us to cut through the noise of food claims in grocery stores and target parents when they are thinking about their food most. Parents are often overwhelmed by choice and short on time. By being there when they choose what to place in their cart, Genesis can effectively engage with them.

- **Tactic 1:** Deploy Genesis representatives and local Genesis farmers to natural and organic stores, such as Whole Foods, for scheduled in-store tastings
 - Encourage farmers and representatives to discuss why organic is important to the environment, removing the disconnect between the food source and the consumer
- **Tactic 2:** Table at the Lane County Farmers Market throughout September, with Genesis' local produce suppliers
 - Encourage farmers and representatives to discuss why organic is important to the environment with attendees
 - At the tabling event, invite families to vote on Genesis' new label, removing their current language, "no hazmat suit required," and replacing it with attendees' voted upon favorite reason to buy organic
- **Tactic 3:** Create pocket-sized coloring books for Genesis representatives to hand out to parents to give to their children that feature the environmental impact of organic and kid-friendly ways to "go green"

Strategy 3: Engage parents in a conversation about the standards and impacts of organic. This strategy will allow Genesis to interact with parents using the

communication channels they expressed interest in when learning about their food, Pinterest and Twitter.

- **Tactic 1:** During the month of September, partner with local organic brands and food and lifestyle influencers and offer a Twitter Q&A about organic
 - For one week, invite consumers to ask questions about the organic standard, organic myths, environmental impacts and the brands participating
 - Equip brand's social media managers with potential responses to questions
 - Use the hashtag, #AllThingsOrganic, to track the conversation on Twitter
- **Tactic 2:** Create an organic Pinterest board with information about the environmental impact of organic and fun ways to engage children in sustainable food education

Objective 2: Obtain media coverage containing our key messages in five media outlets across the Pacific Northwest in the next six months.

Strategy 1: Position Genesis' partnership with its farmers as a way to connect consumers with their food by highlighting the human aspect of organic, the farmers. This will provide Genesis a platform to discuss the environmental impact of using organic ingredients from a source that Generation X parents trust and read: traditional news outlets.

- **Tactic 1:** Pitch coverage of in-store tastings, organic parent event, and trade shows (e.g. Portland Veg Fest, Local Foods Fair)
 - (See Appendix F for example pitch)

Evaluation Criteria & Tools

Objective 1: To increase Pacific Northwest organic juice consumers' awareness of the environmental benefits of organic by 25 percent over the next six months.

- **Criteria:** 25 percent increase in awareness of organic benefits among Genesis consumers
- **Tools:** Send out a survey about perceptions of organic before the start of campaign testing Genesis fans' knowledge of organic and its environmental significance. Send follow-up survey after six months to measure if there has been a 25 percent increase in awareness about the environmental impact of organic.

Objective 2: Obtain media coverage containing our key messages in five media outlets across the Pacific Northwest in the next six months.

- **Criteria:** Receive coverage in five media outlets in the Pacific Northwest
- **Tools:** Monitor media coverage in outlets across the Pacific Northwest using tools such as Google Alerts and Cision over the next six months.

Conclusion

The U.S. Department of Agriculture created the organic standard in 2002 to ensure that those “who want to buy organic can do so with confidence of knowing exactly what it is that they’re buying.”⁷⁴ However, 15 years later, consumers’ understanding of the organic standard and what it aims to protect has become buried under the marketing practices employed by organic brands. Research suggests that nearly 70 percent of consumers who regularly buy organic are unsure of the standard’s implications. Unfortunately, for organic brands such as Genesis, consumers’ confusion is partially due to the vast number of claims shoppers have to consider when purchasing a food or beverage item. Notably, consumers are unable to distinguish between the benefits of organic, local, and natural food and beverage items.

Rather than focusing on educating consumers on the benefits of organic, companies have instead highlighted what is not included in their organic products. Guion and Stanton’s 2012 study on organic advertising uncovered organic brands’ reliance on the absence of bad to promote their products. Moreover, their study found that conventional brands are joining in on the “clean” ingredient trend, threatening organic brands such as Genesis Juice. For example, one of Genesis’ prominent conventional competitors, Naked, promotes “no sugar added” and “no preservatives” on its label, following the organic industry’s trend of “no” claims.

In the Pacific Northwest market, Genesis’ big-name organic juice competitors have yet to take the lead on communicating the benefits of choosing organic products to

⁷⁴ Guion, Deirdre T., and Julie V. Stanton. "Advertising the U.S. National Organic Standard: A Well-Intentioned Cue Lost in the Shuffle?" *Journal of Promotion Management* 18.4 (2012): 515. Web. 2 Oct. 2016.

consumers. Top competitors, Suja, Evolution Fresh, and BluePrint, all carry organic, cold-pressed juices. However, organic is not stressed as the selling point of the juices on owned channels. In terms of marketing their environmental impact, Evolution Fresh is the only brand that actively promotes its commitment to sustainable practices. Instead of highlighting organic, the competing brands primarily direct their social media and website efforts towards connecting their products to a healthy lifestyle. This silence among top competitors provides Genesis an opportunity to stand out on store shelves.

The Eugene-based organic brand should act quickly to revamp its organic messaging, in order to capitalize on the current silence among competitors and in the industry. The Organic Trade Association is reviewing public comments on its multimillion-dollar proposal, GRO Organic, to reinvest in the organic movement by research funding, rebranding efforts and consumer education. However, the OTA has not yet implemented its plan. If Genesis acts now with a marketing strategy that returns to the roots of the movement by positioning choosing organic as an environmentally friendly decision, Genesis can be at the forefront of change within the industry.

Consumers will respond to Genesis' framing buying organic as a sustainable purchasing decision. At its core, the organic standard aims to lessen the environmental footprint of organic farms by reducing pollution and mitigating climate change. Genesis' market, the Pacific Northwest, traditionally places a high value on protecting the environment. All of the interviewed parent and millennial organic buyers indicated that they regularly purchase eco-friendly products with the intent of reducing their impact on the planet. Furthermore, research suggests that consumers, particularly millennials, are willing to pay more for sustainable products. By educating consumers

on the environmental benefits of the “USDA Certified Organic” seal, they will find an added value in Genesis Organic Juice. Not only will this allow Genesis to strengthen its current consumers’ loyalty, but it also provides the brand with the opportunity to secure a new consumer base of those who may typically buy conventional food and beverage items but place a high importance on sustainable products.

This strategic communications plan was designed to increase awareness of the environmental benefits of organic among consumers in the Pacific Northwest by altering Genesis’ approach to communicating its commitment to organic. Genesis’ current messaging of organic relies on fear-invoking language and misleading health claims. Not only does this contribute to consumer confusion, but it also can anger and prevent existing and potential buyers from trusting the brand. By replacing its threatening portrayals of conventional farms with positive messaging on sustainable farming practices, Genesis will avoid contributing to the misconceptions about organic and stand out as a leader in the Pacific Northwest.

To increase awareness among a confused and overwhelmed consumer base, Genesis must effectively target its key publics, millennial and parent buyers, by adjusting its content on owned platforms and generating coverage focused on education through media relations and an influencer program. Raising awareness among consumers will ultimately lead to a change in their perceptions of organic and purchasing behaviors. Ultimately, by amplifying Genesis’ voice in the Pacific Northwest market and leading the industry in the discussion of organic, Genesis will be able to differentiate itself from its organic and conventional competitors and expand its consumer base.

Budget

BUDGET					
Tactic	Component	Detail	Unit Price	Quantity	Total Cost
Millennial Organic Buyers					
#SaveTheSoil Challenge	Free product giveaway each month	5 coupons per month	cost basis	6	
September Partnership Social Media Contest	Product giveaway	5 coupons per winner	cost basis	5	
Influencer Program	Free product samples	5 products per influencer	cost basis	30	
	Print materials - Genesis info card*	8.5" x 5.5" 100 lb. matte paper (1,000 copies)	\$74.67	1	\$74.67
	Print materials - Sourcing map*	4.25" x 5.5" 100 lb. matte paper (1,000 copies)	\$42.88	1	\$42.88
	Free product shipment	USPS Priority Mail 2-Day	\$7.15	\$30	\$214.50
					Subtotal: \$332.05
Parent Organic Buyers					
In-store Tastings	Print materials - Sourcing map*	4.25" x 5.5" 100 lb. matte paper (1,000 copies)	NA	NA	\$0.00
	Print materials - "Green" coloring book	8.5" x 11" two-fold cardstock matte (200 copies)	\$98.74	2	\$197.48
Lane County Farmers Market	Membership fee	(After 2/1)	\$75.00	1	\$75.00
	Print materials - Sourcing map*	4.25" x 5.5" 100 lb. matte paper (1,000 copies)	NA	NA	\$0.00
	Print materials - "Green" coloring book	8.5" x 11" two-fold cardstock matte (200 copies)	NA	NA	\$0.00
					Subtotal: \$272.48
					Total: \$604.53
*based on a six-month timeline					

Table 3: Budget

Table 3 outlines the budget needed to carry out the strategic plan. This is based on a six-month timeline.

Timeline

TIMELINE							
		June	July	August	September	October	November
Millennial Organic Buyers							
Strategy 1.1	Tactic 1: Newsletters and blog posts	XX	XX	XX	XX	XX	XX
	Tactic 2: Monthly #SaveTheSoil challenge	X	X	X	X	X	X
	Tactic 3: Myth-busting social content				XXXX		
	Tactic 4: Local partner product giveaway				XXXX		
Strategy 1.2	Tactic 1: Influencer program	XXXX	XXXX	XXXX	XXXX	XXXX	XXXX
	Tactic 2: Influencer tour				XXXX		
Parent Organic Buyers							
Strategy 1.1	Tactic 1: Pitch feature story	XXXX					
Strategy 1.2	Tactic 1: Genesis and local Genesis farmer representatives in-store tasting	X	X	X	X	X	X
	Tactic 2: Genesis and local farmers table at farmers market		XXXX	XXXX	XXXX		
	Tactic 3: Print materials	XXXX	XXXX	XXXX	XXXX	XXXX	XXXX
Strategy 1.3	Tactic 1: Twitter Q&A				X		
	Tactic 2: Pinterest board development	XXXX	XXXX	XXXX	XXXX	XXXX	XXXX
Strategy 2.1	Tactic 1: Pitch event coverage (tasting, tradeshow, event)		XXXX		XXXX	XXXX	

Table 4: Timeline

Table 4 displays a six-month timeline instructing Genesis on when to implement certain tactics.

Appendix A: SWOT Analysis

<p>Strengths</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Genesis started as a small organic juice cooperative and has remained a “rebel” small brand ever since • Products are made from simple ingredients: whole fruits and agave • The brand holds current partnerships with local businesses, such as Crater Lake Spirits • Ingredients are harvested from local farmers within the PNW • Genesis Organic Juice has loyal long-time fans, “glass bottlers” • The recent redesign of website and labels offers an opportunity to revitalize Genesis’ marketing 	<p>Weaknesses</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Current organic messaging relies on the notion that organic is “healthy” and inorganic is “toxic” • Genesis has a limited marketing budget • Genesis juices are high in natural sugars compared to competition⁷⁵ • Genesis’ newsletters are infrequently and inconsistently sent to its emailing list • Sales growth has slowed, averaging 3.5 percent a year from 2012 to 2016⁷⁶ • Genesis’ price per bottle is high, roughly \$4.50
<p>Opportunities</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Other natural and organic food and beverage brands that are based in Lane County are potential partners (i.e., Nancy Yogurt, Dave’s Killer Bread, So Delicious) • The Pacific Northwest traditionally leads in environmentally friendly behavior in the U.S.⁷⁷ • Consumers are increasingly finding value in sustainable products⁷⁸ • OTA’s proposal to the USDA, GRO Organic, if passed, will help educate consumers about organic 	<p>Threats</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Larger corporations are taking over the natural and organic juice sector, providing larger budgets and more leverage (i.e. Coca-Cola Company owns Suja and Odwalla) • Conventional food and beverage brands are capitalizing on the “what’s not included” trend • Growth in the juice market over next few years is slow⁷⁹ • Consumers express confusion about the difference between organic and natural claims

Table 5: SWOT Analysis

Table 5 outlines the strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats Genesis Organic Juice faces.

⁷⁵ *Juice Research*. Rep. Eugene: Genesis Organic Juice, 2016. Print..

⁷⁶ Russo, Ed. "Genesis Juice of Springfield Rolls out New Label to Gain Customers, Market Share." *The Register-Guard*. N.p., 09 Oct. 2016. Web. 07 Nov. 2016.

⁷⁷ "Most eco-friendly U.S. states 2016 | Statistic." *Statista*. Statista, 2016. Web. 23 Mar. 2017.

⁷⁸ "Green Generation: Millennials Say Sustainability Is a Shopping Priority." *Nielsen*. Nielsen, 05 Nov. 2015. Web. 15 Feb. 2017

⁷⁹ "Juice Market in the US 2015-2019"PR Newswire: news distribution, targeting and monitoring. PRNewswire, 15 Sept. 2015. Web. 21 Mar. 2017.

Appendix B: Blog/Newsletter Content



HUERTO DE LA FAMILIA

The organic strawberries packed into our Strawberry Lemonade and Strawberry Apple Juice are grown minutes away from our coop headquarters. Huerto de la Familia, the organic farm behind the fruit, is a nonprofit dedicated to giving back to the soil and to the community. Through its six-week organic gardening class, Huerto de la Familia aims to improve the lives of low-income Latinos in Lane County through food education.

[Read more about the farm's organic roots >](#)

#SAVETHESOIL CHALLENGE



The organic food movement is based on practices that not only preserve our environment, but aim to improve it. And it all starts with the soil.

In 2014, researchers found organic farms supported 34 percent more plant, insect and animal species than farms using conventional techniques. That's why we think it's important to start at our feet. We choose organic to save the soil, because it's a small but mighty force that helps support the rest of our planet.

In our #SaveTheSoil challenge, we invite you to plant your own organic herbs and plants in recycled containers. Post a photo of your garden with #SaveTheSoil, for a chance to be featured on Genesis' pages and win free product!

[Get the dirt on organic >](#)

We've teamed up with our favorite natural and organic neighbors to create recipes to start the summer off right. Whether fueling up before a morning hike or lounging around in the afternoon sun, we've got your summer sippin' covered.

[Unearth the recipes >](#)



Figure 3: Example Blog/Newsletter Content

This example content provides insight into potential farmer storylines, the #SaveTheSoil challenge, and partnership opportunities.

Appendix C: Social Media Content



Figure 4: Instagram Example Post

This figure provides Genesis with example copy to use as a guide for messaging organic's environmental benefits on Instagram.



Figure 5: Facebook Example Post

This figure provides Genesis with example copy to use as a guide for messaging organic's environmental benefits on Facebook.

Appendix D: Potential Influencer

INFLUENCER LIST						
Outlet	Contact Person	Outlet Topic	Email Address	Audience Type	Unique Monthly Visitors	Blog URL
PNW Bloggers						
Dishing Up The Dirt	Bemis, Andrea	Recipes, Cooking & Baking, Organic Farming		Consumer	39,492	http://dishingupthedirt.com
Creative Green Living	Bonham, Carissa	Gardening, Recipes, Organic Food, Green Living, Do-It-Yourself (DIY), Crafts	carissa@creativegreenliving.com	Consumer, Regional Interest	40,232	http://www.creativegreenliving.com
Roux 44	Centoni, Danielle	Food & Beverages, Recipes, Restaurant Reviews, Home Entertaining	danielle@daniellecentoni.com	Consumer, Regional Interest	1,240	http://daniellecentoni.com
Vegan Miami	Doni	Vegetarianism & Veganism, Travel	hello@veganmiam.com	Consumer	44,045	http://veganmiam.com
The Nourishing Gourmet	Harris, Kimi	Recipes		Consumer	124,715	http://www.thenourishinggourmet.com
The Paper Airplane	Highberger, Chloe	Lifestyle, Travel, Food, Culture	paperairplanechloe@gmail.com	Consumer	7,435	http://www.paperairplaneblog.com/
PDXfoodlove	Hubbard, Rebekah	Cooking & Baking, Recipes, PNW, Sustainability	rebekah.a.hubbard@gmail.com	Consumer	10,610	http://pdxfoodlove.com
10th Kitchen	Lekaviciute, Danguole	Food, Beverages, Recipes		Consumer	6,208	http://www.10thkitchen.com
Pixels & Crumbs	McDonald, Mary	Food, Recipes, Photography		Consumer	1,642	http://pixelsandcrumbs.com
Vegan Miami	Rika	Vegetarianism & Veganism, Travel	hello@veganmiam.com	Consumer	44,045	http://veganmiam.com
The Kitchen Paper	Warrington, Mary	Recipes, Yoga, Travel, Lifestyle	mary@thekitchenpaper.com	Consumer	43,502	http://www.thekitchenpaper.com
PNW Food Instagrammers						
Account	Contact Person	Topic/Focus	Followers	Contact	Other Accounts	
silviaryan	Ryan, Silvia	Recipes, Vegan	14,600	silviaryan@gmail.com	thetinyavocado.com	
tifkent	Kent, Tiffany	Recipes, Health Food, Travel	4,055	www.tabletosoul.com/lets-connect/	www.tabletosoul.com	
wazwu_	Wu, Waz	Vegetarian, Food, Lifestyle	9,281	www.wazwu.com/blog/about-me/contact-me/	wazwu.com/blog	
nowhey lady	Jenna	Recipes, Nutrition, Diet	9,941	nowhey lady@gmail.com	www.nowhey lady.com	
hungrygems	Lauryn, Hannah	Recipes, Food, Health	6,684	thehungrygems@gmail.com		
5/5/17	Sachi	Food, Lifestyle	9,389	foodandsachi@gmail.com		
lettuce_eat_right	Jocham, Emily	Food, Recipes, Organic	11,600			
sasha.swerdlow	Swedlow, Sasha	Sustainable Recipes	27,300	www.tendingthetable.com/contact/	www.tendingthetable.com	
brunchinista	Valle, Jacqueline	Recipes, Food, Beauty	5,355	jacque@brunchinista.com	brunchinista.com	

Table 6: Influencer List

Table 6 features a list of potential influencer partnerships for Genesis Organic Juice.

Appendix E: Media List

MEDIA LIST						
Publication	Contact Person	Phone Number	Email Address	Twitter	Interests	Relevant Stories/Past Coverage of Genesis
Print Publications						
The Register-Guard	General news coverage	541-338-2727	newstips@registerguard.com	@registerguard	General news coverage	
	Edward Russo, Team Editor	541-338-2359	ed.russo@registerguard.com, ed.russo@registerguard.com	@edwardrusso	Business	"Genesis Juice of Springfield rolls out new label to gain customers, market share"
	Sherri Buri McDonald, Reporter	541-338-2367	sherri.buri_mcdonald@registerguard.com, sherri@registerguard.com	@sburimcdonald	Business	"UO Signs Beverage Deal Worth Millions"
	Vanessa Salvia, Reporter		tastings@registerguard.com		Features	"These juices keep their cool Springfield-based Genesis Juice preserves its organic juices with high pressure, not heat, so the fruit truly can shine"
	Dylan Darling, Reporter	541-338-2368	dylan.darling@registerguard.com	@dylanjdarling	Business	Past features of local businesses owners (Synergy, Long's Meat Market)
	Dylan Darling, Reporter	541-338-2368	dylan.darling@registerguard.com	@dylanjdarling	Business	Past features of local businesses owners (Synergy, Long's Meat Market)
Eugene Weekly	Camilla Mortensen, Editor	541-484-0519	camilla@eugeneweekly.com	@eugewkycamilla	General news coverage	
	Kelly Kenoyer, Calendar Editor	541-484-0519	cal@eugeneweekly.com	@kenoyerkelly	Event	"Genesis Juice squeezes high-quality fruit"
	General, Food	541-484-0519	chow@eugeneweekly.com		Food coverage	Summer cocktails features
	Vanessa Salvia, Writer	541-484-0519	vsalvia@gmail.com		Features: food, books, art, music, movies	"Growing Concern: Yep Yep Farm fights to stay organic"
	Rachel Carnes, Writer	541-484-0519			Food	"Genesis Juice squeezes high-quality fruit"
Eugene Magazine	General	541-686-6608		@eugenemagazine	Eugene features	
	Amanda Bedortha, Editor	541-686-6608	editor@eugenemagazine.com		Eugene features	
	Anthony St. Clair, Writer	541-221-1046	writer@anthonyclair.com	@anthonyclair	Food and beverage	"Local food producers flavor the city"
KVAL	General news coverage	541-342-4961	kvalnews@kval.com	@kvalnews	News tips	Community events, local businesses
KEZI 9	General news coverage	541-485-5611	newsdesk@kezi.com	@keziz9	News tips,	Community events, local businesses
KMTR	General news coverage	541-741-2097	newsdesk@kmtr.com	@kmtr	News tips	Community events, local businesses
KLCC - NPR	General News	541-463-6022	news@klcc.org	@klccEugeneOR	News tips	
	Tripp Sommer, News Director	541-463-6002	sommert@lanecc.edu		Local feature stories	Oregon county fair, community
	Brian Bull, Reporter/Announcer	541-463-6002	bullb@lanecc.edu	@bcbull	General News	"A Sustainable Alternative To Beef, Pork, And Chicken? Try Crickets."
The Seattle Times	Michael Doyle					"Organic growers are split over industry-funded ad and promotion proposal"
	Rami Grunbaum, Business Editor	206-464-8541	rgrunbaum@seattletimes.com	@rgrunbaum	Business	
The Oregonian	Lizzy Acker, Reporter		lacker@oregonian.com	@lizzyacker		"New Seasons to bring even more organic produce to San Francisco"
The Portland Tribune	Joseph Gallivan, Reporter	971-204-7874	jgallivan@portlandtribune.com	@joegal	Business	
	Jason Vondersmith, Features Editor	971-204-7870	jasonvondersmith@portlandtribune.com		Features	Feature stories
San Francisco Chronicle	Thomas Lee, Business Reporter		tee@sfchronicle.com	@ByTomLee	Business	"Despite big growth in snack sales, Clif Bar not for sale"
Trade Publications						
SIP Northwest Magazine	General	206-467-4578	publisher@sipnorthwest.com	@sipnorthwest	Beverages	
	Erin James, Editor-in-Chief		editor@sipnorthwest.com	@erinjamesnw	Editorial Inquiries	Daily Sips features
	Sheridan Smith, Writer			@sheridansmith	Food and beverage	"5 NW-Made Juices to Fight Off Seasonal Ailments"
Imbibe	General	503-595-0144	editorial@imbibemagazine.com	@imbibe	Drinks (and alcohol-free)	Featured other Oregon brands (Stumptown)
Eating Naturally	Craig Gustafson, Managing Editor		craig.gustafson@innovationhm.com		Nutrition, Organic Food	

Table 7: Media List

Table 7 lists media outlets and trade publications for Genesis to pitch event coverage and feature stories to.

Appendix F: Email Pitches



Hi Erin,

I hope you're doing well! We loved seeing Seasonal Orange on Daily Sips the other day.

I wanted to reach out to you about a possible feature story you may be interested in. Genesis, in response to the uncertain future of the organic program under the new administration, is revitalizing its commitment to organic.

At a time when organic agriculture is threatened by a 21 percent funding cut to the USDA, Genesis believes it's more important now than ever for consumers to understand the power of their purchasing decisions. Genesis started as a small organic juice cooperative, dedicated to making the smallest impact on the environment while delivering the highest quality products. Today it clings onto its "hippie" roots, by advocating for the organic movement and its importance in preserving the environment.

"Each time someone chooses to buy organic, they choose to preserve the environment; each conscious sip can save the soil," says Genesis President Jonah Alves.

Because of your history of covering Genesis, I think this story is a great fit for you. Let me know if you are interested, and I can set SIP Northwest up with a tour of our facilities and schedule an interview with Jonah Alves.

Best,

Ainsley Blandford
Genesis Public Relations Director
ainsleyb@genesis.com | 555-212-8619



Hi Sherri,

I hope you're enjoying this week of sunshine; it's time we cherish these last few days of blue skies. I wanted to reach out to you about a possible story you may be interested in. Genesis Organic Juice plans to partner with its local suppliers and table at the Lane County Farmers Market throughout September, national organic month.

Genesis aims to host conversations with consumers when they're thinking about their food purchasing decisions most. By targeting Eugene families at the farmers market, the company hopes to engage them in a discussion with Genesis farmers about the importance of choosing organic. Organic brands are fighting to compete with conventional food companies and to dispel misconceptions. By humanizing the story and connecting people with the actual farmer of the strawberries they're drinking, Genesis hopes to bring the conversation about organic back to its roots.

"At its core, the organic movement is about replenishing the soil and preserving the environment. We believe we can cut through consumers' confusion and highlight this by hosting honest and transparent conversations," says Genesis President Jonah Alves.

Genesis will also invite farmers market attendees to vote on their new label. People will be given an option of four different reasons to buy organic, the one with the most votes by the end of the month will go on Genesis' new label.

Because of your history of covering Genesis and other local brands, I think this story is a great fit for you. Let me know if you are interested in covering the event, and I can provide you with more details.

Best,

Ainsley Blandford
Genesis Public Relations Director
ainsleyb@genesis.com | 555-212-8619

Figure 6: Example Email Pitches

The email pitches above will act as guides for Genesis Organic Juice to generate media coverage. The first email pitch is for a feature story on Genesis Organic Juice, and the second is for coverage of Genesis' farmer tabling events.

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